Demography and National Security

Edited by
Myron Weiner
and
Sharon Stanton Russell

Berghahn Books
NEW YORK • OXFORD
2001

CHAPTER 1

International Migration: Predicting the Unknowable

Michael S. Teitelbaum

This chapter addresses the extent to which the theoretical perspectives and empirical analyses produced by several social science disciplines have contributed to our understanding of the causes that underlie international migration. In American academic circles, the subject has been addressed most prominently by demographers, economists, sociologists, and political scientists, with all four drawing upon historical evidence. Elsewhere other academic disciplines such as geography have been prominent as well.

Demographic Theory

If the truth be told, demography has not produced a coherent and convincing theory of international migration. However, a number of demographic forces are often described as important elements underlying the initiation of international movements.

High Fertility and Rapid Population Growth

Many commentators have suggested that the very rapid demographic growth experienced in the developing world over the past three decades (due to rapid mortality declines accompanied by sustained high fertility rates) leads to a kind of demographic "overspill": Rapid natural increase in regions or countries with populations already large relative to available resources impel some residents to seek better opportunities elsewhere. They argue not that this is the sole cause of international migration, but rather that it is important among other contributing factors. A related point is that high rates of natural increase

produce, with roughly a two-decade lag, rapid growth in the numbers of young adults, empirically shown to have the highest migration propensities. Internal and international migratory movements are often linked, with many rural young adults moving first to urban areas seeking better economic opportunity, and then abroad when these urban labor markets become saturated.

Low Fertility

Some believe that the low fertility rates that now generally characterize industrialized countries lead, over time, to rising demand among employers for imported workers. Other things being equal, labor markets in such settings become tighter (again with a two-decade lag), producing pressures for higher wages and in some cases labor market bottlenecks. Meanwhile, low fertility rates imply a demographic age structure characterized by rapid increases in the proportion of those beyond retirement age and rising tax burdens on the working-age population to support public pension systems financed by taxation on a pay-as-you-go basis. In this analysis, then, imported workers serve the interests of employers (by holding down wage inflation) and of governments and older native populations (by slightly reducing the average population age and by increasing the number of workers contributing to financially unstable pay-as-you-go pension systems).

Some analyses also allude to indirect effects or intermediary elements through which demographic forces operate. These include not only the impacts of high or low fertility upon age composition, as noted above, but also the effects of rising agrarian population densities upon overgrazing and related environmental pressures that eventually stimulate outmigration. Similarly, large cohorts of young adults concentrating in urban areas with high unemployment rates may produce political and social instabilities (for example, higher crime rates), which in turn may result in substantial movements of people.

Some analysts seem confident that such demographic arguments can suffice to explain trends and patterns in international migration. Unfortunately, while these do offer valuable insights, they are but partial ones: the realities are far messier than any simple demographically based theory would imply. For example, the bulk of international migration takes place within the developing world, between countries with similarly high fertility rates and youthful age structures. Moreover, the substantial migrations that have occurred in recent decades from very low-fertility Eastern Europe to moderately low-fertility Western Europe and North America can hardly be explained by fertility or population growth differentials, as the relationships run in the opposite direction from that implied by purely demographic explanations.

Economic Theory

As in demography, the truth is that there is no single coherent economic theory capable of providing a convincing explanation of trends and patterns of international migration. Numerous economic explanations of international migration have been proposed. Publications emanating from a recent Committee on South-North Migration established by the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP)[1] have provided a useful and well-informed review of the economics literature, grouping current theories into five categories. The following section summarizes these review papers in very brief form.

Neoclassical Macroeconomic

Migration flows are said to arise as a kind of international labor market arbitrage between countries and regions with differing labor supply and demand situations. These labor market differentials are seen as the primary forces that initiate international migration movements; government policies affect such movements only by affecting the underlying labor market. Under this framework, international migration movements would not be expected to begin without labor market differentials, and should end when such differentials decline to insignificant levels.

Neoclassical Microeconomic

This framework views international migration as driven by decisions made by rational utility-maximizing individuals who perceive positive net returns from international movement, taking into account both its benefits and its costs. Hence if certain human capital attributes increase potential returns to migration while its costs are reduced by social, political or technological developments, the volume of such migration will increase. As in the Neoclassical Macroeconomic framework above, labor market differentials in supply and demand, operating through differentials in potential earnings and employment, are said to drive the process. Hence government policies can affect migration patterns only by reducing such earnings/employment differentials, or by increasing the real cost of migration.

The "New Economics of Migration" (Group/Family Theories)

Here the decision-making unit is broader, the social group or family unit rather than the individual, which (again in a rational utility-maximizing format) decides whether or not one or more of its members should migrate internationally in the service of the economic interests of the group. The goals are to diversify the origins of total group/family income so as to minimize its exposure to non-diversified risks such as crop failure,

local economic or political crises, and so forth, and to gain access for the group/family to capital and credit not available locally. In this framework, then, labor market differentials are not necessary factors underlying international migration; instead, the driving forces are access to insurance, capital, and credit. Hence, government measures aimed at creation of more effective capital, insurance, and futures markets may be expected to affect group/family decisions about international migration of their members.

"Dual Labor Market" (Recruitment) Theories

In this framework, the critical factor initiating international migration is the international recruitment of low-wage workers by employers and governments in higher-wage economies. Such workers are described as necessary to restrain otherwise inflationary forces in their labor markets, and to provide a contingent labor force that can be expanded or contracted in response to varying demand. Hence international migration is argued to be inherent in the economic structure of recruiting economies, and can be affected only minimally by direct policies intended to affect migration.

"World Systems" Theories

As in Dual Labor Market theories, international migration is an inherent element of economic structures, but in this case the focus is less on national economies and more on world markets. The driving forces are those embodied in the penetration by "capitalist economic relations into peripheral, noncapitalist societies," driven by multinational firms, neocolonialism, and the actions of national elites in peripheral societies. As in Dual Labor Market theories, the key policy decisions are those affecting the international flow of capital and goods rather than migration policies per se.

As is also true for demographically based theoretical perspectives, some proponents put forward one or another of these economics-based approaches as sufficient explanations of migration behavior, in either theoretical or empirical terms. Such claims are unconvincing. None passes muster on its own, notwithstanding the grandiosity of some of the titles chosen. Yet while all have their deficiencies, each offers some important insights into key forces that may underlie international migration.

Other Theoretical Perspectives

Demographic and economic perspectives focus sharply upon factors affecting the potential for international migratory movements, but offer only limited attention to the actualization of such potential or to their

persistence. Factors that contribute to the actualization of potential appear to be heavily in the realm of policy, and are discussed in some detail below. Before considering these, we turn briefly to the common observation of the persistence of international migration—the fact that migration flows often continue long after the economic and demographic circumstances that underlie them have changed.

Casual newspaper reading makes it readily apparent that international migration movements are associated with the development of dense social networks across borders, and with the emergence of profitable networks of intermediaries providing assistance (both legal and illegal) to would-be migrants. These phenomena have been addressed by two social science frameworks, emanating from outside of demography and economics:

Network Theories

Network theories are not in conflict with economic theories, but emphasize that the factors perpetuating international migration may be different in character from those initiating it. In particular, the transnational social networks which develop between migrants and their kin and neighbors in the origin country serve as the "social infrastructure" of international migration—social connections that make further international movements less risky and lower in cost, and thereby have the effect of perpetuating and perhaps increasing international migration flows even when the initiating forces have waned. Policies that favor family unification of migrants facilitate the effects of such networks.

Institutional Theories

These theories point to the roles played by intermediaries that typically develop to serve the needs of migrants and would-be migrants. These institutions cover a wide range: from the prosperous immigration bar (recently one of the most rapidly growing sectors of the U.S. legal profession); to lawful nonprofit religious and/or humanitarian organizations that see themselves as serving the needs of vulnerable migrants; to clearly illegal, profit-driven, and sometimes predatory organizations of "people-smugglers" who extract substantial fees to facilitate the unlawful entry and employment of migrants.[2,3]

In between are twilight institutions such as so-called "immigration consultants" (some of them both competent and law-abiding, some not) and farm labor contractors—legally constituted firms providing contract workers to farmers with often less-than-careful scrutiny of their workers' legal status. Like social networks, such institutions serve to perpetuate and sometimes to increase migration movements long after the initiating forces have waned, and present significant challenges to many governments seeking to regulate their activities.

Some syntheses of these various perspectives may prove useful, drawing eclectically from diverse perspectives that appear to be supported by empirical test. One worthwhile example of such theoretical eclecticism, undergirded by empirical sophistication, is recent work by scholars seeking to assess the relative importance of demographic and economic differentials and other forces in the enormous wave of migration from Europe during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In brief, their findings to date indicate that:

> ... rates of natural increase at home and income gaps between home and overseas destinations were both important, while industrialization (independent of its influence on real wages) made a moderate contribution. Our results also support the arguments of those who stress the influence of "friends and relatives" among previous emigrants abroad. Our results suggest that these latter effects were strong, creating persistence and path dependence in emigration flows. (Hatton and Williamson 1994: 557)

In short, their findings suggest that demographic differentials, economic differentials, and network factors may all have played important roles in explaining the trajectories and pace of this movement of more than 50 million persons out of Europe.

The Actualization of International Migration Potential: The Roles of States

However, even a combination of demographic and economic theories with network and institutional elements provides an inadequate explanation of international migration. As noted earlier, such a hybrid theory would provide useful insights into the potential for and persistence of international movements, but would have little to offer about the actualization of such potential. Yet it is actual, not potential, migration for which an explanation is sought, and the actualization of potential depends heavily upon factors arising in many other domains of human life.

It is precisely at the boundary between the potential and the actual that the state plays such a central role.[4] The most striking weakness in migration theories drawn from the social sciences is their failure to deal in a serious way with government action in initiating, selecting, restraining, and ending international migration movements. Zolberg (1999: 71), for example, notes that "it is remarkable that the role of states in shaping international migration has been largely ignored by immigration theorists."

Whether or not academic and political commentators consider state action, they often see international migration as driven by economic, demographic, and social forces so powerful as to overwhelm any efforts by governments to affect them—a kind of human tectonics.[5] This may be a legitimate perspective in theoretical terms, but it is not one that fits the facts very well.

First, there are numerous cases in which government policies—whether formal or informal, explicit or implicit—serve to promote the export of migrant labor. This point is so obvious as to not require detailed elaboration; one need only refer to the actions of governments such as those of the Philippines, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Bangladesh, India, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Vietnam, Barbados, and many others.

Second, there are all too many examples of governmental action (or inaction) that results in mass emigrations due to war, violence, persecution, human rights abuse, mass starvation, and/or ethnic tensions. Here again, one need only provide a partial list of recent examples: Kosovo, Bosnia, Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Mozambique, Sudan, Somalia, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Cuba, Haiti, Turkey, Iraq, and so on.

Finally, all governments adopt policies and actions designed to limit inflow or outflow of international migrants, either directly via border and interior controls, or indirectly via diplomatic, economic, or military actions. No government has ever renounced its right, under the global system of states, to control the entry of non-nationals across its borders, other than in the context of specific bilateral or multilateral treaties such as those underlying the European Union.

Two caveats must immediately be noted: that of the United Nations Convention and Protocol (1951, 1967) regarding refugees, which constrain state actions in returning refugees in their territories to persecution in the refugees' own homelands; and the self-evident fact that the effectiveness with which states have exercised their right to control entry has varied greatly over time and place.

Even with these caveats, the array of instruments deployed for the purpose of control is impressive. These include both direct controls to prevent unwanted entry, and indirect or remote controls to affect behavior well beyond national borders. The following instruments are typical:

Direct Controls at Borders

The most visible and near-ubiquitous form of state control over entry is that exercised by immigration authorities at land borders, ports, and airports. Such activities are often exercised by specialized police forces (for example, the U.S. Border Patrol; the German Bundesgrenzschutz). In addition, governments concerned about potential mass movements across their borders sometimes mobilize regular and reserve military forces (as in Austria) and coast guards (as in the United States and Italy) for border activities.

Indirect or "Remote Controls" Beyond Borders

Passports and Visas: Zolberg (1999: 73) suggests that during the last "world immigration crisis" around the turn of the twentieth century, the

United States and other Western countries developed then-novel "remote control" mechanisms such as passports and visas to regulate immigration. These devices are now such conventional requirements for international movement that it is hard to recall that they were once striking innovations. Previously, entry of immigrants had been regulated post hoc, only after the would-be immigrants had arrived. (The purpose of Ellis Island in New York harbor was to screen immigrants who had already crossed the Atlantic, so as to prevent the entry of "undesirables.")

Mandated Sanctions on Carriers

A related form of remote control places upon the carrier (airline, shipping line, etc.) the burden of validating that each of its passengers has the passport and visa needed to enter the country to which he or she is traveling. If arriving passengers are found to lack the necessary documents, governments may impose monetary fines on the carriers, and/or require them to transport such passengers back to their points of origin at no cost.

Intelligence

A less conventional form of remote control involves the collection of overseas intelligence about the backgrounds and activities of individuals and organizations facilitating the fraudulent movement of migrants. This has been a relatively weak part of state efforts to regulate international migration, but cooperation among national police agencies has been increasing in recent years.

Externalization of Asylum and Refugee Claims

Rising numbers of asylum claims, many of them based upon unlawful entry and/or fraudulent documents, have led many industrial countries to elaborate a further set of measures and proposals aimed at expediting review of claims at borders and ports of entry, and/or forcing such asylum claims into venues external to the territory of the destination state. Such measures fall into several categories:

Expedited asylum procedures: efforts aimed at initial screening of asylum claimants at airports and other entry points so as expeditiously to examine and potentially to exclude those that are "frivolous" or "manifestly unfounded."

External or offshore screening: efforts intended to limit access to in-country asylum adjudications, via initial screening in another country—in the asylum claimant's own country, in a third country, or in some cases on the high seas (as in the U.S. policy toward Haitians being transported in boats).

Safe country lists: Some countries (for example Germany) have developed formal lists of "safe countries," including both those found to

involve little or no risk of persecution and "third countries" across which asylum claimants have transited and in which they could have claimed asylum had they so wished. Asylum claimants in these categories can be provided with "fast-track" examinations of their claims.

In sum, it is fair to conclude that control by states over entry by nonnationals is normal, and substantial. All governments consider it to be among the most fundamental elements of their sovereignty. No government has renounced the right to exercise such control. Nor has any government admitted publicly that it has lost control over such entry, presumably because public perceptions that such control is not being exercised can be politically explosive.

Although such controls have many deficiencies in practice, they are far from ineffectual. Consider that among the countries of large-scale emigration, there are very few indeed from which more than ten percent of the population has emigrated: Haiti, Afghanistan, Cuba, Rwanda, and not many others. Even Mexico, a country well known for the large and sustained volume of emigration by its citizens, reports that less than ten percent of Mexican-born persons reside outside of Mexico (most in the United States). In most countries, no matter how poor they may be, the overwhelming majority of people do not leave. In part this results from inertia, lack of information, and the importance of familial and related ties; but governmental policies limiting access to desirable destinations are also significant factors.

The case of migration from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to the U.S. mainland provides a valuable quasi-natural experiment as to what levels of migration might be expected in the absence of state regulation. Puerto Rico has long experienced considerably lower income than the mainland United States, but Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens by birth, hence there are no legal restrictions of any kind upon their migration to the mainland. As early as 1950, nine percent of Puerto Ricans were already living on the mainland, and in the ensuing two decades this percentage rose rapidly, reaching 23 percent by 1970 (Massey et al. 1994: 703). During the mid-1970s, legal changes required that the island's minimum wage rates be the same as those on the mainland, thereby reducing the economic incentives for lower-income Puerto Ricans to migrate. Still, emigration to the mainland continued, although its rate slowed and migration selectivity shifted toward the unemployed and most poorly educated groups on the island.[6]

The case of Puerto Rico offers but one especially clear case from among mountains of evidence for the centrality of the state in international migration movements. It seems quite likely that, even in the absence of state controls over entry, only a minority of the populations of poor countries would migrate to rich countries, but the numbers who would do so would nonetheless be far larger than at present. While the capacity and willingness of states to exercise highly effective control over entry do vary a great deal, and in some cases may have decreased in

recent years, it is important to emphasize that international migration is neither uncontrollable, nor is it uncontrolled.

International and Regional Agreements

Beyond their own unilateral policy measures, many industrialized countries have sought to engage multilateral cooperation on migration issues. Some have even entered into international agreements embodying such mechanisms. Examples include the 1990–1991 Dublin Convention;[7] the 1990 Schengen Agreement;[8] and the 1992 Edinburgh Declaration. There are also bilateral agreements, including "readmission agreements" between the United States and Haiti for return of Haitian nationals, and agreements between Germany and its eastern neighbors that embody the "safe third country" concept.

Preexisting regional security agreements have also been used to minimize migrations perceived to be destabilizing. In substantial part for such reasons, Costa Rica and Mexico led regional efforts to end the civil wars in Central America. The United States, driven largely by concerns about uncontrolled migrations (*Washington Post*, 1994), sought to engage the Organization of American States, and failing that, sub-regional Caribbean organizations, in support of its diplomatic and ultimately military efforts to reestablish the elected government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Haiti. Many states have sought to mobilize the Organisation of African Unity to support military action in Somalia, Rwanda, and Zaire/Congo, with concerns about the humanitarian and security implications of mass migrations never far from the surface. NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have been deeply engaged since 1992 in the political and security implications of asylum, refugee, and migration issues (Russell 1993: 23, 81). Military initiatives by NATO in Bosnia and Kosovo have been motivated to a substantial degree by threats perceived by NATO member states, both indirectly from the feared consequences of a Yugoslavia fractionating along ethnic lines, and directly as consequences of the mass migrations unleashed by violence in these areas.[9]

As may be seen from the above examples, some efforts to involve regional organizations and security agreements have met with considerable success, while others may be judged failures. Whether successful or not, all illustrate the growing intersection between migration and security concerns.

Opposition

To be sure, many efforts by states to exercise control (whether unilateral, bilateral, or multilateral) have attracted controversy and criticism. Expedited

processing, for example, has been criticized as an unwarranted limitation upon due process obligations to would-be asylees; critics note in particular that genuine asylum-seekers often arrive without adequate documentation of persecution, or with documents that are fraudulently obtained because the persecuting authorities refuse to provide *bona fide* documents (Moussalli, cited in Russell, Keely, and Christian 2000: 30).

Similarly, external or offshore screening is criticized on grounds that it limits the legal rights of asylum-claimants under international law, and may impose an unjustified burden upon such persecuted people. The basic idea of safe countries is criticized by some as a potentially serious infringement on the rights of refugees, and the particular lists of safe countries have themselves been challenged.

Much of such criticism is based upon principled opposition to any limitations upon the rights of individuals to claim asylum, as a matter of basic human rights. Other critics act for a variety of less principled motives: ethnic solidarity with those claiming asylum; political use of asylum as a foreign policy tool to embarrass the governments of source countries; and the more mercenary interests of those who, for a fee, advise their clients to file dubious asylum claims as a means of gaining long-term and perhaps permanent residence.

There has also been considerable opposition to proposals for humanitarian military interventions such as those in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. For some opponents, such interventions smack of colonialism or neocolonialism; others oppose military intervention on principle; others believe that the circumstances of such cases do not warrant the costs in casualties and expenditures resulting from such intervention.[10]

Likely Futures

In Dante's *Inferno*, there is a special place in Purgatory reserved for "prognosticators." With this imagery held firmly in mind, what can available theory, assessed in the light of recent experience, tell us about likely futures?

If migration patterns are determined by demography and economics, recent world trends would suggest increasing international migration movements in the coming decades. Fertility rates in many industrialized countries are already very low, and where they are not, they are tending toward decline. Meanwhile, in many developing regions fertility rates are far higher, although commonly also tending toward decline. No matter what happens to fertility rates over the next few decades, the powerful and long-lived momentum of rapid population growth implies with considerable certainty that we will see even larger growth in the labor forces of the developing world.

In the economic domain, the trends we can see are toward increasing extension of international market forces to more and more of the world

(that is, more "capitalist penetration"), globalization of production, and so forth. In addition, in recent years we have seen widening differentials in economic prosperity, with incomes and wealth rising in Western industrial countries and falling in the former Soviet Union, in the formerly rapidly growing "Tigers" of East Asia, and in much of Africa and Latin America. Given such demographic and economic trends, many of the theoretical propositions summarized earlier would lead to expectations of substantial increases in the potential for international migration.

Are these demographic, social, and economic propensities, all seeming to favor increasing potentials for international movement of people, so powerful that states can have only an insignificant degree of control?

No, not really. In fact, very substantial state control is in evidence. We can surely acknowledge that a good deal of present-day migration is unwanted by the governments of receiving states, and often in violation of their laws. Still, there is far less international migration occurring than would be the case if states were not regulating entry (as in the Puerto Rican case described earlier). Theoretical propositions that fail to reflect this set of powerful forces thereby diminish their own credibility.

The forces that affect state policy stances vary widely, even among prosperous liberal democracies. The power of such variables is illustrated very well in a recent study by a leading French analyst, Patrick Weil, who compares the policy behaviors of Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States in light of their differences along such dimensions:

> The recent evolution of immigration policies demonstrates the adaptability of the democratic developed states. In reaction to increased migration pressure and the extension of rights for migrants, states have answered by mobilizing more legal, financial and bureaucratic means. Therefore the transformation of migration into a worldwide phenomenon has not automatically involved an increase in immigration flows: when this has happened, it was due primarily to legal windows still open to entry. The closure of these windows has demonstrated that regulation is possible for a democratic state. When the level of uncontrolled flows is still high, as in the United States, it depends more on cultural and historical than on economic or demographic factors. (Weil 1998: 18)

Among the "cultural and historical" factors that Weil sees as dominant, differences in political ideologies and processes should not be minimized. Europeans of the Left and the Right are often astonished to learn that one thread of American conservative thought includes the so-called "libertarian" ideology that argues for borders wholly open to unlimited international migration or, in more muted form, for increased levels of legal immigration and minimal efforts to restrain illegal entry (Teitelbaum 1992). This perspective is most visibly represented by the editorial board of the Right-libertarian newspaper *Wall Street Journal*, which has on more than one occasion editorialized for adoption of a five-word Constitutional amendment on immigration: "There shall be open borders" (*Wall Street*

Journal 1990). These elements of the political Right form common cause with those of the Left who are committed to mass immigration for reasons of human rights, civil rights, multiculturalism, ethnic politics, or the likelihood that new immigrants of low income levels are likely to support liberal political and economic policies. In no other country can such an odd coalition of right-wing and left-wing advocates be found.[11]

The structure of political institutions and the norms of political debate will also affect public responses. A parliamentary system dominated by two parties can be expected to react differently from one based on unstable and shifting coalitions, and both will differ from the behavior of the congressional system of the United States. Voting systems based on proportional representation or transferable ballots have different implications from the first-past-the-post constituency systems of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada. The importance of interest group politics and of access to campaign finance varies as well, and can be expected to affect the behavior of states.

In the United States, the twin facts that interest groups have long dominated U.S. congressional politics and that immigration policies have traditionally been controlled by the Congress rather than the Executive means that the policies that emerge typically reflect the strongly held views of certain well-organized and deeply interested groups: some employers (California agribusiness traditionally; the information technology sector more recently), immigration lawyers, and ethnic organizations. The further facts that the United States is characterized by high levels of residential segregation (Massey and Denton 1994), and that most immigrants settle in a few states and metropolitan areas, combine to magnify the significance of immigration policies for these few geographic areas, while making these policies less relevant for most of the rest of the country.

As to the future, if levels of international migration were to stay high or increase in future years, should we anticipate that such movements will likely produce significant threats to the internal coherence and stability of receiving states, as the compositions of their populations are rapidly transformed?

Again, not really. Instead, we should expect a wide range of consequences, depending heavily upon a host of other factors in the spheres of demography, economics, social structure, and politics, all of which are themselves affected by differences in history, values, and cultures. Not only do factors vary widely from country to country, but in most cases their evolution is almost impossible to predict.

In demographic terms, the pace of change (national and local) resulting from both migration and fertility rates can be an important factor affecting political and other responses. Yet much about such long-term outcomes cannot be predicted: To what extent will the preferred destinations remain constant or change over time? What will fertility trends be among natives and migrants? To what extent will there be substantial

intermarriage between resident and migrant groups? How will expressions of ethnic identity evolve over the long term? One of the best treatments of this set of uncertainties has been developed by a committee of the National Research Council (Smith and Edmonston 1997).

Moreover, in the real world what matters is change *as perceived by the public.* While public policy experts properly pay careful attention to quantitative data, it is visible changes "on the ground" that seem to matter most to broader publics: language changes on local business signs; types of restaurants and bars; characteristics of elementary school classes; and so on. If immigrant groups choose to cluster heavily in a few locations, only those already living in these places are likely to perceive the demographic changes underway, and in these locations the pace of such change will be magnified by its concentration.

Rates of fertility and natural increase are also relevant for affecting perceptions about the pace of change. If the society into which migration is occurring is itself experiencing rapid demographic growth due to high rates of natural increase (the difference between births and deaths), the *perceived* demographic impact of migration may be less than from similar volumes of migration into a society experiencing slow indigenous demographic growth.

Characteristics of migrants, defined in social and cultural terms, are also of relevance to public perceptions. If new migrants are perceived as similar to or ethnically connected to the resident population (for example, *aussiedler* moving to Germany from Russia, *nisei* from Brazil and Peru to Japan, or Bangladeshis to the Indian state of West Bengal), demographic change may be perceived as smaller than if comparable numbers of migrants are seen as ethnically, racially, or linguistically distant from the receiving population.

There are also uncertainties about whether or not relevant publics will perceive migration trends as threats to their "national identity." Both the elites and the masses of most societies see important value in their distinctive national cultures—language, history, political systems, the arts, and so forth. For many societies, the arrival of large numbers of foreign migrants (or of other foreign cultural elements such as films and television programs) can be seen as a threat to the cohesiveness and integration of the society. Such perceptions can be especially strong if such foreign influences are perceived to be increasing rapidly, are concentrated as to locale, or attract the rhetorical attention of visible political groups.

Among liberal democracies, the most energetic debates of this type have appeared in France, Germany, and the Canadian province of Quebec. In all three, political parties committed to "protecting our national identity against foreigners" emerged during the 1980s—the National Front in France, the *Republikaners* and similar groups in Germany, the *Parti Quebecois* in Quebec. Initially such groups were ignored or dismissed as trivial by the political establishment, but over time they have proved to attract significant numbers of political supporters. Ultimately,

center-right establishment parties in France[12] and Germany came to embrace some of the rhetoric of the National Front and *Republikaners*.

Meanwhile, in other countries such as Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, and the United States, there is a countervailing stream of political thought described generally as "multiculturalism." Its supporters see a multicultural society as richer than a culturally homogeneous one, benefiting from diversity in values, religions, languages, worldviews, cuisines; hence immigration from culturally distinct societies is a virtue rather than a threat. Both Canada and Australia have established national government agencies and funding directed toward goals of multiculturalism, while in the United States such support is more at the level of rhetoric accompanied by legal requirements for bilingual education and multilingual ballots.

Much will also depend upon economic trends, and these too are quite unpredictable over the longer term. Will there be growing prosperity, or rising privation? Will labor markets be tight or loose; will unemployment be low or high? As correctly noted by many advocates favoring high levels of immigration, public opposition to such policies is at its strongest during recessions and economic crises (in the language used in such discussions, immigrants are "scapegoated" for high levels of unemployment, inflation, or other economic problems.) Based on this kind of analysis, the long-term strategy is that of the "ratchet," with tactics determined by short-term economic circumstances: During periods of economic stress, the goal is to prevent the adoption of any legislative or enforcement changes; during periods of prosperity, the focus turns toward adoption of expansionary measures.

Based on the above discussion, one conclusion seems inescapable—although some will find it esthetically unappealing. A genuine theory of migration, that is, a set of predictive hypotheses that can be tested empirically, may well be a mirage. Since the role of states is an essential feature affecting the scale and character of migration, a predictive theory would require us to know the unknowable: how people of diverse countries, and their governments, will respond to future experiences with international migration.

Notes

1. The analyses of this committee have been presented in a series of journal articles, including Massey et al. (1993: 431–466; 1994, 699–751). For a lucid summary, see Sharon Stanton Russell, 1995.
2. These range from the inexpensive smuggling services along the Mexico-U.S. border to the $30,000–40,000 per person services provided to Mainland Chinese by the organized crime syndicates known as Triads.

3. Personal interviews by the author with government officials and researchers in Xiamen (Fujian Province), Guangzhou (Guandong Province), and Hong Kong, 3–10 January 1994.
4. This section draws upon Russell and Teitelbaum (1992: 6–7).
5. See, for example, Cornelius, Martin, and Hollifield (1994).
6. See Ortiz (1986), Castillo-Freeman and Freeman (1992), and Ramos (1992), as cited in Massey et al. (1994: 705).
7. The Dublin Convention is known more formally as the "Convention Determining the State Responsible for Examining Applications for Asylum Lodged on One of the Member States of the European Communities." It was signed by the twelve Member States in 1990 and 1991. For a fuller discussion, see Hovy and Zlotnik (1994), and Russell, Keely, and Christian (2000).
8. The Schengen Agreement is among Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Italy, Spain, and Portugal.
9. The argument is that the West has a strong security interest in what happens in these regions of the former Yugoslavia, given the deeply cultural, ethnic, and religious origins of the war among Serbs, Croats, Bosnian Muslims, and Kosovo Albanians. As but one example, consider the following commentary from *The New Yorker* in 1994:

> Forgetfulness [about Bosnia] would be catastrophic, since Bosnia really does matter to the security of Europe, and the security of Europe, for all the Clinton Administration's efforts to place stronger emphasis on other parts of the world, really does matter to the United States. If the war spills over the borders of Bosnia, Europeans had better learn to duck. But, even if NATO now succeeds in containing the war, the stakes are very high. Bosnia is more than simply another state, internationally recognized in the usual ways. It is a secular state and a democratic one, and it is multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-confessional on a continent that, thanks to patterns of migration, is increasingly all those things. If Bosnia's dismemberment is tolerated, nationalist demagogues, in Europe and elsewhere, will take note. (*The New Yorker* 1994: 6)

10. The *Washington Post* invoked all these arguments in a June 1994 editorial opposing military intervention in Haiti.
11. For a discussion of these ideological perspectives and the odd alliances among them, see Teitelbaum (1992).
12. Stanley Hoffmann summarized the French politics as of 1994 as follows:

> [Premier Edouard Balladur] knows that the National Front's progress, both in percentage of the electorate (12.5 percent in 1993 as against 8.5 in 1988) and in all the traditionally conservative sectors in French society—particularly the rural districts and in the urban lower middle and even upper-middle classes—is a major threat to his own moderate right constituency. With the enthusiastic help of Interior Minister Pasqua, he has proceeded to appease right-wing voters and inpatient deputies with tougher laws on immigration and on the requirements for French nationality.
>
> ... As a clever Machiavellian, Balladur, without making any fundamental changes in French practice, may have pacified the fears of the voters who supported him that French national identity is being eroded. (Hoffmann 1994: 14)

References

Cornelius, Wayne A., Philip L. Martin, and James F. Hollifield, eds. 1994. *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Hatton, Timothy J., and Jeffrey G. Williamson. 1994. "What drove the mass migrations from Europe?" *Population and Development Review* 20: 557.

Hoffmann, Stanley. 1994. "France: Keeping the Demons at Bay." *New York Review of Books* XLI, no. 5: 14.

Hovy, Bela, and Hania Zlotnik. 1994. "Europe without internal frontiers and international migration." *Population Bulletin of the United Nations*, No. 36.

Massey, Douglas S., and Nancy Denton. 1994. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Massey, Douglas S., et al. 1993. "Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal." *Population and Development Review* 19: 431–466.

———. 1994. "International Migration Theory: The North American Case." *Population and Development Review* 20: 699–751.

Moussalli, Michel. Cited in Russell, Keely, and Christian (2000).

New Yorker, The. 1994. "This is War." 21 February, 6.

Russell, Sharon Stanton. 1993. *International Migration in North America, Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa: Research and Research-related Activities*. Geneva: Economic Commission for Europe and the World Bank.

———. 1995. *International Migration: Implications for the World Bank, Human Resources Development and Operations Policy*. Working Paper Number 54. Washington: The World Bank, May 1995.

Russell, Sharon Stanton, Charles B. Keely, and Bryan P. Christian. 2000. "Multilateral Diplomacy to Harmonize Asylum Policy in Europe: 1984–1993." Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University, Institute for the Study of International Migration.

Russell, Sharon Stanton, and Michael S. Teitelbaum. 1992. *International Migration and International Trade*. World Bank Discussion Paper No. 160. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

Smith, James P., and Barry Edmonston, eds. 1997. *The New Americans: Economic, Demographic, and Fiscal Effects of Immigration*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Teitelbaum, Michael S. 1992. "Advocacy, Ambivalence, Ambiguity: Immigration Policy and Prospects in the United States," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 136: 208–225.

Wall Street Journal. 1990. "The Rekindled Flame," 3 July, A10.

Washington Post. 1994. "Invade Haiti?" 8 June, A22.

Weil, Patrick. 1998. "The State Matters: Immigration Control in Developed Countries," preliminary unedited version prepared for Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, ESA/P/WP/146. New York: United Nations.

Zolberg, Aristide R. 1999. "Matters of State: Theorizing Immigration Policy." In *The Handbook of International Migration: The American Experience*, edited by Charles Hirschman, Philip Kasinitz, and Joseph DeWind. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.